

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

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R 111302Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7466

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ABIDJAN 1814

E O 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT, IV

SUBJ: HOUPHOUET TURNS ATTENTION TO NORTH

1. NEARLY TWO MONTHS AFTER HE PROMISED PARTICIPANTS OF THE DIALOGUE 74 SESSION THAT HE WOULD FOCUS ON AND TRAVEL IN THE INTERIOR THIS YEAR, PRESIDENT HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY MET MARCH 7 WITH GOVERNMENT AND PARTY OFFICIALS FROM NORTH-CENTRAL IVORY COAST TO HEAR ABOUT PROBLEMS AND ASPIRATIONS OF THE REGION. MOST REQUEST FROM OFFICIALS OF THE KORHOGO, BOUNDIALI, AND FERKESSEDOUGOU PREFECTURES WERE OF A MATERIAL NATURE, E.G., ROAD, SCHOOLS. ONE THORNY, LONG-STANDING POLITICAL PROBLEM ARISING OUT OF JEALOUSY BETWEEN VILLAGES WAS RAISED, AND EACH PREFECTURE HAD REQUESTS OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE NATURE.

2. AFTER LISTENING TO THE GRIEVANCES, HOUPHOUET ANNOUNCED HE WILL TRAVEL TO THE AREA, BEGINNING IN KORHOGO (WHERE A NEW ROAD IS BEING RUSHED TO COMPLETION SO THE PRESIDENT CAN HAVE SOMETHING TO INAUGURATE), FOR A 10-DAY PERIOD COMMENCING MARCH 18. AT THAT TIME HE PROMISED TO TRY TO SATISFY CERTAIN ASPIRATIONS DEPENDING UPON FUNDS AVAILABLE. HE ALSO PROMISED TO RESOLVE ONCE AND FOR ALL THE POLITICAL PROBLEM AFTER HEARING THE VIEWS OF ALL SIDES. HOUPHOUET ANNOUNCED HE WILL MAKE SEVERAL SIMILAR TRIPS ELSEWHERE IN THE COUNTRY DURING 1974.

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3. IVORIAN REACTION APPEARS TO BE QUITE FAVORABLE TO THE
PRESIDENTIAL PLANS. HOUPHOUET DOES NOT TRAVEL INTO THE INTERIOR
(EXCEPT YAMOUSSOUKRO) VERY MUCH ANYMORE, AND THIS CONTACT SHOULD
RESULT IN GIVING LOCAL OFFICIALS AND REGIONAL-NATIONAL TIES A SHOT
IN THE ARM. IT IS SAID TO BE NATURAL THAT HOUPHOUET WOULD BEGIN HIS
VISITS IN THE NORTH-CENTRAL PART OF THE COUNTRY, WHICH HAS ALWAYS
BEEN AND REMAINS ON OF HIS STRONGEST SUPPORTERS. AN OFFICIAL FROM
ANOTHER PART OF THE COUNTRY HAS EXPRESSED THE HOPE, HOWEVER, THAT IN
RETURN FOR THIS SUPPORT HOUPHOUET WILL NOT END UP DOLING OUT MOST
OF THE MONEY HE HAS AVAILABLE FOR THIS YEAR AND LEAVE OTHER AREAS
WITH NOTHING.

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